

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter introduces the beginning of this research was conducted. In the background of the problem, the researcher explains about the important of reading comprehension for students. The researcher states how students' reading comprehension ability is still low. The researcher also identifies the problems, limits the problem, formulates the problem and gives the objectives and the use of this research. She also explains the scope of this research and definitions of related terms.

### **1.1 Background of the Problem**

English is one of the international languages that is used by many people all over the world in many areas and aspect of human life such as technology, economy, social, and politics. Since Indonesian Department of National Education has declared English as the first foreign which is learned from elementary school until university, English teachers have to use appropriate materials to develop student's language skills which consist of speaking, listening, writing and reading.

In School or university, students are expected to read information which is mostly written in English. This is based on the fact that reading dominates the teaching materials in almost English text book. The guideline of School Based Curriculum (KTSP) states that SMA/ MA students should be able to use the language in

informational level, that is, expected to access knowledge by the language skills (Depdiknas, 2006: 307). Due to the goal of the curriculum above, students are expected to get information for increasing their knowledge which is mostly written in English from reading activity. Moreover, reading can provide the students with the message and information given in form of written text.

Clark and Silberstein (1987) define reading as an active process of interacting with print and monitoring comprehension to establish the meaning. It means that reading is an active process in which the readers are active in organizing their purpose and using their brain and also their schemata to comprehend the text in order to get the explicit and implicit information stated there. It can be stated that the students, besides being good at reading are also asked to be good at comprehending. Reading is not only intended to know the letters stand for but also involved power of full understanding.

From the statement above, the researcher notices that comprehension of the text is the most important things. Comprehension will determine the essence of reading process and it is essential because by comprehension we can get the point of reading text.

In reality most of students at senior high school level still have problems in comprehending the English text. One of the problems is caused by the student's inability to recognize what the writer intends to say in the text, in other words the students are incapable to understand the writer's messages through the use of reference word. It was proved by the researcher when she had her teaching practise at SMA YP Unila Bandar Lampung from January, 28 until April, 23,

2010. However, the English teacher in this school also admitted that the students' ability to understand the writers' messages through the use of reference word was still low. When the students wanted to identify the specific information in a text, they did not know the function and the use of reference word in the English text.

They were confused to identify the specific information which was hidden by the writer through the use of reference word in the English text. For example, in the sentence "the buffalo is killed by the man. He killed it by himself". Students were confused to know with whom the man killed the buffalo.

Relation to the problem has been mention previously, Simatupang in Rahman (1991: 2) says that some researcher in Indonesia indicate that the ability of Indonesian students in comprehending the text is insufficient. The problem is also caused by the students' ability in recognizing what the writer intends to say in the text.

Furthermore, Grellet (1985: 15-16) says that if the reader does not understanding some words in the passage, some of the fact and idea will probably escape him. He also says that if the reader does not understand inter or intra sentential connectors he may also fail to recognize the communicative value of the passage since those words act as signal indicating the function of what follows. This means that a readers have to be aware of the relationship among the elements, then called cohesive devices (Halidayand Hasan, 1975: 28).

Gerllet (1985: 15) also says that students have to recognize the various devices which are used to create textual cohesion, e.g. the use of reference and link words.

Reference word can help students to comprehend how the part of sentence or paragraph can be integrated. Thus the more students recognize reference word in the written materials, the higher their reading comprehension will be.

Eli Herlina (1997) in her research stated that students got progress on their reading comprehension achievement after they were taught by reference word. In other words, teaching words of reference has good effect to student's reading comprehension achievement. In relation with this Sumarno (1991: 21) found that if students' understanding of reference word low then their reading comprehension also low.

From the explanation above, the researcher assumes that there are so many reasons why students get difficult to comprehend the English text, and reference word is one of alternative to overcome this problem. Reference words help the students to comprehend how the part of sentence or paragraph can be integrated. Therefore teaching reference words is important in the teaching learning process, especially in reading comprehension.

Therefore the researcher has chosen SMA YP Unila Bandar Lampung as the school to conduct her research because the students' ability in reading comprehension still low, while reading dominates the teaching material in almost English text book.

## **1.2 Formulation of the Problems**

Based on the background of the research above, the researcher formulated the problem as follows;

- a) Is there any difference of students' reading comprehension ability before and after being taught through reference word?
- b) Is there any significant increase of student's reading comprehension ability after being taught through reference word?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Research**

Concerning the research problem, the objectives of this research are:

- a) To find out whether there is a difference of students in reading comprehension ability before and after being taught through reference word
- b) To see if there is a significant increase of students' reading comprehension ability after being taught reference word.

### **1.4 Uses of the Research**

The uses of the research are:

- Theoretically, the result of this research is expected to support the previous theories that reference word give positive effect on students' reading comprehension ability
- Practically, this research can give information to the English teachers that understanding reference word can be used to increase students' reading comprehension ability.

### **1.5 Scope of the Research**

The research conducted at SMA YP UNILA Bandar Lampung. The researcher took one class as the experimental class; there was  $X_5$  and took another class as the try out class; there was  $X_6$ . It has been chosen randomly by using lottery. The material was taken from English text book based on the School Based Curriculum (KTSP) of SMA especially for tenth grade. This research used objective reading test as the instrument. Objective reading test was used for try out, pretest and posttest. Those tests were in the form of multiple choices. The scoring system and degree of difficulty of the pretest similar to the posttest, both items were used to measure students' ability in reading comprehension by using reference word.

This research focussed on students' understanding of reference words to increase their reading comprehension ability. Because reference word helped the students to comprehend how the part of sentence or paragraph can be integrated.

### **1.6 Definition of Terms**

- Reading is a process of receiving meaning from written materials.
- Reading comprehension means relating to what someone does not know or new information to what he or she already knows through printed messages being read. It may be regarded as relating aspects of the world around human being including what is being read to the knowledge, intensions and expectations are already have in readers' head (Smith, 1982: 15)

- A cohesive device in a text is a word or phrase that is used to link sentence or paragraph to make the paragraph or the text coherent.
- Reference is a kind of word which refers to noun or pronoun which sometimes before or after the subject.